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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1787
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 4810
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0303
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY 1695
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY 0045
RUEHDH/AMCONSUL DHAHRAN PRIORITY 0292
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 0391
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 0052
RUSBPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 0188

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [SA](#) [PK](#)
SUBJECT: JOINT SAUDI-PAKISTANI MILITARY EXERCISE

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Susan L. Ziadeh for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (U) On Oct. 21 the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported that a joint Saudi-Pakistani military exercise began in the southern region of the country. Nicknamed "Al-Sammam 3," the three week long exercise is the third in a series of training exercises focused on improving the interoperability of Saudi and Pakistani armored brigades. The first two exercises were held in Pakistan.

¶2. (U) Major General Ali bin Zaid Khawaji, commander of forces in the southern region, told the SPA that the exercise was aimed at improving the performance of the Saudi armed forces.

¶3. (C) DAO confirmed the Pakistani military participation in a meeting with the Pakistani Defense Attache, Brigadier Hassan Jalil Shah. Shah said that approximately 220 Pakistani soldiers were in southern Saudi Arabia for the joint exercise coordinating with the King Faisal Tenth Brigade. DAO described the exercise as a regularly scheduled event that reinforced the military partnership between the two countries.

COMMENT:

¶4. (C) At a time when Pakistan's military faces a growing counterinsurgency within its borders, their willingness to provide over 200 soldiers for a routine training exercise in Saudi Arabia only underscores the importance of the bilateral security relationship. The fact that this training was not postponed or altogether cancelled speaks to the deep level of commitment that the Pakistani military has with Saudi Arabia.
SMITH